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Eastgate  
Village,  
Phase II.  
L & C Cnty

PLEASE R



Department of Health and Environmental Sciences  
STATE OF MONTANA HELENA, MONTANA 59601

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A. C. Knight, M.D., F.C.C.P.  
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Montana Bureau of Mines & Geology, c/o Montana Tech, W. Park St., Butte, MT 59701  
Fire Marshall Bureau, Department of Justice, Helena, MT 59601  
Office of Interstate Landsales Registration, Attn: Carlton Goodwin, Title Bldg.,  
Room 324, 909 - 17th Street, Denver, CO 80202  
Lewis and Clark County Commissioners, Courthouse, Helena, MT 59601  
Lewis and Clark County Sheriff, 15 N. Ewing, Helena, MT 59601  
Governor's Office, Helena, MT 59601  
Information Unit, Dept. of Health & Environmental Sciences, Helena, MT 59601  
Environmental Information Center, Box 12, Helena, MT 59601  
Ken Korte, Montana Historical Society, Helena, MT 59601

Re: Eastgate Village, Phase II  
Lewis and Clark County

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed preliminary environmental review has been prepared for Eastgate Village, Phase II in Lewis and Clark County and is submitted for your consideration. Questions and comments will be accepted until April 5, 1979. One extension of time not to exceed seven days will be granted upon request if there is sufficient reason for the request. All comments should be sent to the undersigned.

Sincerely,

Edward W. Casne, P.E., Chief  
Subdivision Bureau  
Environmental Sciences Division

EWC:GJW:mh

Enclosures



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES  
Cogswell Building, Helena, Montana 59601  
(406)449-3946

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Division/Bureau Department of Health & Environmental Sciences - Subdivision Bureau

Project or Application Eastgate Village, Phase II - Lewis and Clark County

Description of Project A 275 lot subdivision on 152.8 acres in Lewis and Clark County, the second of 3 phases. Public water and sewer systems will be expanded from Phase I plans.

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POTENTIAL IMPACT ON PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

	Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments on Attached Pages
1. Terrestrial & aquatic life and habitats			X			1
2. Water quality, quantity and distribution		X				2
3. Geology & soil quality, stability and moisture			X			3
4. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality			X			4
5. Aesthetics			X			5
6. Air quality					X	6
7. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources			X			
8. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy		X				7
9. Historical and archaeological sites			X			8



# POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

	Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments on Attached Pages
1. Social structures and mores			X			
2. Cultural uniqueness and diversity			X			
3. Local and state tax base & tax revenue		X				9
4. Agricultural or industrial production			X			10
5. Human health		X				11
6. Quantity and distribution of community and personal income		X				12
7. Access to and quality of recreational and wilderness activities				X		
8. Quantity and distribution of employment		X				13
9. Distribution and density of population and housing	X					14
10. Demands for government services	X					15
11. Industrial & commercial activity		X				16
12. Demands for energy		X				17
13. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals			X			
14. Transportation networks & traffic flows		X				18

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction \_\_\_\_\_

Individuals or groups contributing to this PER. Superintendent of East Helena Schools,  
Lewis & Clark County Sheriff, Air Quality Bureau, Montana Power Company

Recommendation concerning preparation of EIS Recommend against E.I.S.

PER Prepared by: Gary J. Wiens

Date: March 21, 1979





1. TERRESTRIAL & AQUATIC LIFE & HABITATS - The Department of Fish and Game comments that the proposed subdivision is adjacent to developed areas and that there is no significant wildlife habitat involved.

The proposed subdivision will be located on formerly cultivated land that does support some ducks and geese. Deer, fox and coyote have been observed in the area. However, this area is not critical to the survival of the above mentioned wildlife. Displaced wildlife will move to more remote areas and will be replaced by wildlife common to developed areas.

There are no known critical plant communities in the area.

2. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION - Potential groundwater contamination hazards can result from two sources within the sewage disposal system: the treatment and holding lagoons and the spray irrigation site. The depth to groundwater is estimated at a minimum of 15-25 feet and the developer has agreed to monitor groundwater at both lagoon and irrigation sites.

The primary danger of the treatment and holding lagoons is the possibility of excessive exfiltration from the lagoons. A small amount of seepage is unavoidable, but major losses are an indication of improper construction or maintenance.

The project engineer expects that the sewage will attain secondary treatment standards through aeration in the lagoons. With this degree of treatment and the given groundwater depth no pollution of groundwater is expected. The nearest well is 1/4 mile to the north of the spray irrigation site.

The developer has submitted test well data showing that adequate groundwater is available to develop a water supply system. Continuing development in the East Helena area will lower the aquifer level in the future, however, the degree of lowering has not been determined.

3. GEOLOGY & SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE - Construction of homes, roads and utility lines will temporarily destroy much of the natural plant growth in the area and expose the ground to wind erosion. Erosion will be reduced as streets are paved and homeowners plant grass and shrubs.

The soils are level and well-drained with low clay content. They should provide adequate building sites with little risk of slope instability or settling.

4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY - Vegetation will change from dryland wheat to those grasses, shrubs and trees commonly found on residential lots.

5. AESTHETICS - The proposed subdivision involves the conversion of farmland to a large number of residential sites and will destroy another vestige of the formerly rural landscape of this area. Long-time residents of surrounding land may feel a sense of loss of one or more of the rural qualities that first attracted them.

At the same time the development is consistent with current growth patterns and trends in the East Helena area. Located away from the edge of the valley, the subdivision will not mar the skyline that is an important aesthetic attribute of the Helena-East Helena valley.



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6. AIR QUALITY - Dust from construction and the resulting land disruption will create a temporary increase in particulate matter. The long-term effects of increased travel and the popularity of wood-burning stoves on air quality will not be known until the valley is more completely developed.

Jon Bolstad, of the Air Quality Bureau, commented in a telephone conversation that air inversions are common in the Helena Valley in fall and winter and that these stable atmospheric conditions trap fine particulates. At present they are of small concentrations and present no known health hazard, but at some time in the future they may increase to the point of concern to health and aesthetics. Local problems of air quality, such as at busy intersection, will appear before general air quality problems occur.

7. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR & ENERGY - The subdivision will create an additional significant power demand. Power will be supplied by the Montana Power Company.

Bill Jones of the Montana Power Company said that there are no problems anticipated in serving Phase II of Eastgate Village with natural gas and electricity. Established facilities provide a good feeder system to this area and the development will present fewer problems than supplying services to remote areas.

Petroleum fuels will be used in construction of the streets and dwellings and by the future residents. Many residents will commute to Helena, a distance of approximately 6 miles, in order to work and shop.

8. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES - In response to a query on Eastgate Village, Phase I, Dr. Dee Taylor of the Montana Anthropology Department said that no survey has been done in the proposed subdivision area to determine if historical or archaeological sites do exist. Several sites do exist in this part of the valley, however.

9. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE & TAX REVENUE - Changing land use from agricultural to residential and constructing dwellings will generate considerable tax revenue in the form of property taxes.

10. AGRICULTURAL OR INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION - Wheat land will be removed from production. However, the production of the land is low (12-15 bushels/acre) and the land is not irrigated.

11. HUMAN HEALTH - Safe operation of the sewage disposal facilities requires that construction, operation and maintenance are in conformance with approved plans. The most obvious potential for health hazards lies with the lagoon and spray irrigation facilities. They must be fenced to prevent entry. Effluent must be treated so that aerosols resulting from spraying will not carry pathogens to people living downwind. The facilities can be considered to operate safely only when operation and maintenance requirements are met in full.

See item 2 for additional comments.

12. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL INCOME - The availability of middle income housing will attract people to the East Helena area, and result in a shift of the population center of the valley away from Helena. Businesses and services in the eastern part of the valley will expand and flourish, possibly at the expense of businesses in Helena.



13. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT - Large numbers of people moving into the Helena valley could increase unemployment rates.

See item 12.

14. DISTRIBUTION AND DENSITY OF POPULATION AND HOUSING - Phase II of Eastgate Village would provide homes for approximately 800 to 900 people. The present population of East Helena is 1,800. The proposed subdivision would generate a dramatic increase in population for this area and if all three phases are constructed the population of Eastgate Village may exceed that of East Helena.

The subdivision will provide smaller lots than in areas where large lot size is necessitated by individual sewer and water systems. The smaller lots are more easily afforded by middle income families.

15. DEMANDS FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES - Chuck O'Reilly, Lewis and Clark County Sheriff, said in a telephone conversation that his office cannot provide adequate police protection for any new subdivisions without additional manpower. There is currently no deputy sheriff located in East Helena.

The developer has requested annexation to the East Valley Fire District and also to the East Helena Fire Department. At this time no final decision has been reached on the annexation. Steve Granzow of the Department of Community Affairs, recommended the formation of an independent fire district to service Eastgate Village and any adjacent or nearby subdivisions approved in the future. This recommendation is based on the large population that would be included in these subdivisions.

Robert Radley, Superintendent of East Helena Public Schools, said that current enrollment stands at 680 students in grades K-8. Currently bonded construction will provide classroom space for 412 more students. Classroom needs are estimated on the basis of 0.85 students for every single family dwelling.

Eastgate I was approved for 313 single family dwellings and Phase II will add 274 for a total of 587. At 0.85 students per dwelling the two phases could provide 499 students at full development. Since there are already 14 students from Eastgate I the net increase would be 487 students.

Based on this estimate the students from Eastgate Village Phases I and II alone would cause an increase in students that would exceed the currently planned classroom capacity of the school district. This calculation does not include any of the expected increase due to new residents of homes outside Eastgate Village.

Roads will be paved by the developer and maintained by county crews. Presumably the increased tax revenue would cover the cost of maintenance.

16. INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY - See item 12.

17. DEMANDS FOR ENERGY - See item 7.





18. • TRANSPORTATION NETWORK & TRAFFIC FLOWS - The Department of Highways estimates that Eastgate Village Phases I and II could generate 3000 to 4000 average daily trips and that congestion could be expected at the intersection of Highway 12 and East Helena Drive at peak travel periods. The 1976 traffic count for Highway 12 in the vicinity was 2936 trips per day. The expected increase would double the traffic flow in the area of the subdivision.

Additional congestion could be expected in Helena during peak hours from commuters entering on Highway 12.



